

SWWC Service Cooperative presents the 33rd Annual

CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG ARTISTS



October 29, 2026 | For all students in grades K-8
Held at Southwest Minnesota State University, Marshall, MN

REGISTRATION



Ignite your imagination and embrace your artistic spirit at the SWWC Young Artists Conference! This dynamic event encourages students to immerse themselves in the world of art, where their hands and minds bring extraordinary ideas to life. Schools and parents are invited to bring students to this engaging event, where they will explore various artistic realms and be inspired to embark on thrilling new adventures. Get ready for a unique experience of creativity!

Who can register:

- School teachers register groups of students and their chaperones.
- Parents register their students and themselves.

Online Registration Deadline:

September 23, 2026, at Midnight.



www.swwc.org/ya



SWWC
STUDENT ENRICHMENT

Contact: Andrea Anderson,
Student Enrichment Coordinator

 507-537-2257

 www.swwc.org/ya

 andrea.anderson@swwc.org

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

General Registration

- Available to students in grades K-8
- Register Online: www.swwc.org/ya
- There is a separate registration link for schools and for parents.
- There are two sections of the registration, the Contact information section and the Registration section.
- All attending students and adults must be registered online.
- There is no student/adult ratio at this time.
- Not required but prefer contact person be an attending adult.

School Participants

- Schools attending are responsible for collecting and entering registrations. Payments can be made online or see billing option below.
- Prefer schools register all students attending with them.
- If your school is unable to attend, send information home to parents, giving them the opportunity to attend on their own.
- School district funding may be available to support teacher and student participation in SWWC enrichment programs through MINNESOTA GIFTED AND TALENTED REVENUE MN Statute § 126C.10 2(b).

Parent Participants

- Parents can attend on their own as a family.
- An adult must be registered along with the students or note the adult attending with your student.
- If a parent is registering a student who is attending with the school, they must select attending with school and who approved it.
- If a parent misses the school registration deadline, they can still register and attend on their own.
- Check with your school to see if they are participating as a school group.

Registration Fees and Deadlines

Registration Deadline: **September 23, 2026, at midnight**

- \$40/per student
- \$10/per adult

Payments

- Parent payments are made at the time of registration with a Credit Card. Payments go through WePay.
- Schools can pay with Credit Card.
- If a school wants to be billed after the event, they must contact Andrea for a billing code prior to registering. **There is now a \$15 fee for a paper invoice.**

Lunch

- Bring your own lunch – refrigeration is not available.
- Check with your school about the sack lunch program.
- Place lunches in containers or coolers and label with school or parent name.

Supplies

- Supplies are provided for students, unless otherwise mentioned in session description. Supplies are for students only.

Sessions

- The conference features an opening keynote and three hands-on learning sessions for students, each lasting one hour.
- Students choose six sessions topics (grade appropriate) and are then scheduled into three sessions that best fits their schedule.
- Select sessions in the order of preference.
- Choices selected by student DOES NOT represent their final schedule.
- The student's final schedule is based on their choices, session demand & session size; therefore, we cannot guarantee students will be assigned all requested topics. We do our best to get them into as many of their choices as possible.
- We retain the right to limit the number of students per district in a specific session.
- A session may be canceled due to the number of registered students. Or a session may be added if needed.

Conference Details

- Conference information is available at www.swwc.org/ya.
- A few days before the event, or as soon as it is ready, the **final schedule** and other information will be emailed to the person's email on the registration.
- Please share information with chaperones/parents.
- Chaperones/parents are responsible for knowing the Conference information and the cancellation policy.
- Contact person will need to check in and pick up their group packet the morning of the conference.

Book Fair - Commuter Lounge (BA Bldg.)

- Paper Pie will run a book fair all day.

Students with Special Needs

- The SWWC Service Cooperative, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities ACT (ADA), is dedicated to making conference activities accessible to all students. Please contact Andrea for special accommodations by September 23, 2026.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

- Cancellation requests must be received by the final registration deadline for a refund, less a \$10/student service charge.
- After the deadline, no refunds will be processed.
- If a student is unable to attend, try to send someone in their place and notify Andrea of the change.



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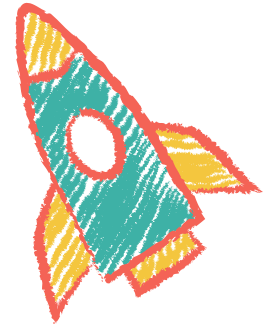
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AGENDA AND KEYNOTE

AGENDA

8:00 am - 9:00 am	Check-In, Refreshments
9:00 am - 9:15 am	Welcome
9:15 am - 9:45 am	Keynote
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Session I
11:00 am - 11:45 am	Lunch
11:45 am - 12:45 pm	Session II
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Session III
9:00 am - 2:30 pm	Book Fair



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Shawn McCann Street Painter/Muralist/Art Consultant

As an artist, Shawn McCann is one who loves to explore the relationship of art, space, and interaction. Having graduated from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design with a BFA, Shawn has grown into a multi-media, multi-disciplinary artist whose work explores color, texture, form, and content. This approach has led to the many areas in which Shawn's work has encompassed including; street painting, murals, fine art, children's books, installation art, temporary and permanent art and commercial illustration.

He has been featured at numerous street painting festivals throughout the U.S. and overseas and has worked on projects such as Exhibition sized pieces and corporate clients. His work has won numerous awards, been a NEA grant recipient, and is held in private and public collections, and has also been featured twice at the LA Times Festival of Books as a featured illustrator. Shawn was one of the few American artists chosen to participate in the Dubai Canvas, one of the most prestigious street art festivals in the world and currently organizes 9 street art festivals throughout the Midwest. In 2023 Shawn opened up Canvas Convergence Art Gallery to showcase the 3D interactive element of his and his team's work. www.shawnmccann.com



SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

****IMPORTANT NOTE:**

Due to limited space and high demand, students can only be scheduled into one wheel thrown pottery session per year attending.

Select sessions appropriate for student's grade level K-2, 3-5 or 6-8

A. Shape Up!

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8

The Art of Positive & Negative Space: Is it POSITIVE or NEGATIVE? You will learn the difference between positive and negative space. You will complete 2 paintings, one will be POSITIVE SPACE, using GEOMETRIC MAGNETIC CANVAS BOARDS. You will then use these geometric painted shapes to create NEGATIVE space on a CANVAS BOARD. These two paintings will inspire your creative knowledge that both POSITIVE and NEGATIVE spaces are equally important in an artwork's composition. Students will embrace this creative way of learning about composition. ***Bobbie Alsgaard-Lien**

B. Cardboard Creations

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8

Turn an ordinary cardboard box into an extraordinary work of art! Let's explore how textures, shapes, and layers can transform simple cardboard into a one-of-a-kind sculpture. Cut, bend, fold, and build your way to a creative cardboard creation! ***Sarah Bednarek**

C. Splatters and Wiggles

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8

Organic Shapes and Contour Lines: Get ready to transform messy paint splatters into a wild, moving masterpiece! In this session, you will explode colorful watercolors onto thick paper and trace the wild edges over and over with smooth markers. Watch your page fill with glowing, ripple-like lines as you build a hypnotic, vibrating work of art to take home. Along the way, you will discover the magic of organic shapes, master contour lines, and learn how to make a still picture look like it is dancing. ***Megan Busman**

D. Electric Chalk Animals

Gr. 3-5 & 6-8

Who says animals can't have a little attitude? Jump into this step-by-step drawing adventure as you create a loopy octopus, fancy giraffe, and a sassy penguin. Grab some colorful chalk and dark paper and learn how to make your animal look like it's glowing like a neon sign. Learn simple tricks for blending, shading, highlights, and add personality as you turn your drawings into a one-of-a-kind electric animal masterpiece! ***Melanie Cable**

E. Stick it! Create Your Own Stickers

Gr. K-2, 3-5, 6-8

Get ready to design, color, and create your very own stickers! In this fun, hands-on class, young artists can choose from cool pre-made designs or dream up their own. Make as many as you can during class, then take them home to decorate your water bottles, notebooks, and other items that need a little extra style! ***Jennifer Christensen**

F. Spooky Paper Mache

Gr. 3-5 & 6-8

Paper mache is a fun crafting technique that combines paper, water, and glue to create a moldable material perfect for all kinds of creative projects. In this spooky Halloween-themed session, we'll use paper maché to create our own mini pumpkins and friendly ghosts! Get creative with shapes, colors, and decorations while making festive Halloween art to take home. ***Cera Cordova**

G. Urban Sketching

Gr. 6-8

You don't have to live in a big city to be an urban sketcher! Urban sketching is all about slowing down, looking closely, and capturing the world around you. In this hands-on session, you'll use pen and watercolor to sketch everyday scenes, places, people, and details that catch your eye. Learn simple techniques for drawing what you see and turning ordinary moments into colorful, creative memories you can keep forever. Wherever you are—your world is your sketchbook! ***Brandy Fenegan**

H. Horsin' Around Underwater

Gr. K-2

Dive into a colorful underwater adventure and create your own fantastical seahorse masterpiece! Students will design a unique seahorse using pencils and Sharpies, filling it with fun patterns, shapes, and details. Then, they'll bring their creation to life with vibrant watercolors and a playful splatter-paint technique. Get ready to make a splash with color and creativity!! ***Ed Fornberg**

I. Turning Up the Heat! ☺☀

Gr. 3-5

Get ready to turn up the heat and unleash your creativity! Students will design a colorful desert scene filled with bold patterns, interesting shapes, and desert-inspired details. Using pencils, Sharpies, and vibrant watercolors, they'll bring their unique artwork to life. Along the way, they'll experiment with layering colors and playful painting techniques to create a hot, colorful desert masterpiece! ***Ed Fornberg**

J. Space Cats

Gr. 3-5, 6-8

We will create fun & funky squiggly cats in space! In this class, you will learn drawing & painting techniques that get you in touch with your own creativity. It's a good way to practice line work & have fun with it! There is no wrong way to paint a squiggly cat ***Janel Guertin**

K. E-Z Block Printing

Gr. 3-5 & 6-8

E-Z cut blocks are easy to carve & print, no experience necessary! The students will create their own print. You can bring your own 4" x 6" image. A very simple image is recommended such as a cartoon character or there are samples to choose from. We will print with water soluble ink and a rolling pin. Fast, Fun and Easy! **(*Warning: students will be using a knife to carve.) *Bradley Hall**

L. Air Dry Clay Adventure

Gr. K-2, 3-5, 6-8

Get your hands ready to squish, roll, pinch, and sculpt your very own air-dry clay creation—no kiln, no oven, just pure imagination. We'll explore fun ways to shape and decorate, from adding textures to creating cool details. Best of all, when your masterpiece is done, it will dry all on its own, so you can take it home and show it off! ***Clayton Hubert**

M. Pastel Galaxy Painting

Gr. 3-5 & 6-8

Paint a glowing galaxy on black paper with swirling colors, a bright center, and sparkling stars. The dark background makes the colors shine like deep space. We will be using chalk and oil pastels and a few paint splatters for stars. ***Tamara Isfeld**



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SESSION DESCRIPTIONS CONT.

N. Watercolor Adventures

Gr. K-2, 3-5

Grab your paintbrush and let your imagination lead the way! During this creative adventure, students will use watercolors, words, and their own ideas to create a one-of-a-kind story on paper. They'll experiment with color, explore watercolor techniques, and bring their characters, places, and adventures to life through art and storytelling. What story will you paint? ***Zachary Jahn**

O. Tunnel Books from GARBAGE!

Gr. 3-5 & 6-8

Together we will create Tunnel Books from recyclable material!! Your Tunnel Book will be a multilayer image using paper and collaged materials. You will create your own custom cover and learn the basic fundamentals of Book Making! ***Sierra Kallio**

P. Sow Much Fun: Seed Art

Gr. K-2, 3-5, 6-8

Seed art is fun, unique and very popular in Minnesota! In this session students will create pictures using seeds on paper. They will be provided with paper, pencils, glue and a variety of seeds to create whatever images they would like to make. I am corn-fident you will find this activity exceedingly fun! ***Oak Kelsey**

Q. Whimsical Watercolor

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8

Let your imagination run wild with watercolor! In this playful, hands-on art session, you'll experiment with watercolor techniques, color combinations, and unexpected painting tools. Discover what happens when you mix colors, try new techniques, and let the paint take the lead. Come explore, experiment, and see what whimsical wonders you can create! ***Kennar Louwagie**

R. Chalking the Streets

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8

Students will learn the ins and outs of being a chalk artist and creator of public art. They will learn the difference between 2D chalk art and 3D chalk art. They will also learn how to blend the colors to create jaw dropping art creations that everyone will love. ***Shawn McCann**

S. The Mystery Masterpiece Challenge!

Gr. 3-5 & 6-8

How It Works! Before class, the instructor divides one large picture into equal squares (one square for each student). Each child receives only one square. They don't know what the finished picture looks like—they simply recreate the lines, shapes, and colors inside their square as carefully as they can. When everyone finishes...The magic begins! The teacher places all of the drawings together like a giant puzzle, revealing a spectacular masterpiece that no one could have created alone!

***The Zoo Man**

T. Plan it, Build it, Test it!

Gr. K-2

Can you turn your drawing into a real creation? After hearing how to make a plan, students will sketch your design. Then using simple wooden blocks, you will put your plan to the test. You'll build your creation and see how closely it matches your drawing! Along the way, you'll discover how artists use planning, observation, and creativity to bring ideas to life.

***SammyJo Miller**

U. Draw Anime Characters!

Gr. 3-5 & 6-8

Love anime and manga? Come draw your own adorable chibi-style character with oversized heads, expressive faces, and fun poses! You'll discover simple drawing techniques, create your own unique character, and add personality with clothing, hairstyles, and accessories. Whether you're just starting or already love to draw, you'll leave with new skills and a character that's all your own. Just bring your imagination and get ready to create something super cute! ***SammyJo Miller**

V. Make a Comic Book Character or Logo

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8

Ever dreamed of creating your own superhero, villain, or comic book legend? In this hands-on session, you'll create an original comic book character or design a logo that shows off their personality and style. Grab your pencil, unleash your imagination, and start creating a comic book world that's uniquely yours! ***Adam Preuss**

W. A Weaving Wonder!

Gr. 4-5 & 6-8

Discover the colorful world of weaving! In this interactive, hands-on workshop, students will learn the basics of weaving while creating their own unique project to take home. Explore patterns, textures, and color combinations as you turn simple yarn into a one-of-a-kind work of art. No experience is needed—just bring your creativity and be ready to weave! ***Thalia Reis**

X. Monster and Animal Character Mash Up

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8

Do you enjoy drawing, imagining, and creating your own characters? Here you'll mix and match unique features from monsters and animals to invent a one-of-a-kind character. Each artist will receive a helpful character handbook filled with tips and ideas to spark your imagination. Come ready to dream up something totally wild! ***Scott Rolfs**

Y. Readers Theater

Gr. 3-5 & 6-8

Step into the spotlight and become someone—or something—completely different! In this fun, low-pressure theater experience, you'll explore the basics of performance, including voice, projection, expression, movement, and character role play without the pressure of memorizing lines. You'll work together to bring a short script to life and finish the session with a mini performance. No memorization, no auditions—just grab a script, find your character, and get ready to perform! ***Melanie Schmidt**

Session Descriptions Cont. on next page.



Photos, Videos, & Media

By participating in this event, you are giving SWWC permission to use any audio/video recordings and photographs that are taken during the event.



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SESSION DESCRIPTIONS CONT.

Z. Doodle it, Letter it, Love it!

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8

During this session you will combine hand lettering and doodling to design an art print you'll love. We will use paint markers, watercolor makers, crayons, ball point pens & many other mediums to figure out what you love. We will go over bubble letters, calligraphy, color combinations and ways to figure out what it is you love to create.

***Kady Simpson**

AA. Clay Caricatures

Gr. K-2, 3-5 & 6-8 (mix)

Work with Sculpey Modeling clay to create creatures, figures and other sculptures from your imagination. The items can be baked and painted at home. ***John Sterner**

BB. Electric Pottery Wheel Experience

Gr. 3-5, 6-8 (mix)

Students will get to experience using soft clay to make small, hand thrown forms with an electric pottery wheel. They will visit the Sculpture/Pottery Lab, learn about electric and gas kilns, different styles of pottery wheels, see examples of finished hand built and wheel thrown pottery, plus the stages clay goes through to become useable finished glazed works. Demonstrations will be given on how to use soft clay to make simple forms by hand on the pottery wheel. Then students will practice making their own small forms. The pottery will not be saved, dried or fired; due to no kiln operator. ***Jim Swartz**

MEET YOUR PRESENTERS



Bobbie Alsgaard-Lien

I am a retired art instructor from Minnesota West Community College. I continue to be involved with young people through substitute teaching and workshops www.agneshnora.com

Sarah Benarek

I am the artist and owner of Blue Barn Traveling Art Studio! I have a Master's degree in art therapy and counseling. I enjoy working with people of all ages to provide space, materials, and time to explore their creativity and be amazed at what they can create! www.facebook.com/bluebarnartstudio

Megan Busman

I'm Megan Busman and I have been an elementary art teacher for 3 years. I love to explore new types of art and share those experiences!

Ms.Chevious (a.k.a. Melanie Cable)

Ms.Chevious (a.k.a. Melanie Cable) is a full-time artist that specializes in whimsical and odd art on many mediums, including watercolor, chalk, acrylic, and photography. She tours the Midwest in the summer and is rarely seen in the winter months, like Bigfoot. www.facebook.com/Ms.CheviousMurals

Jennifer Christensen

Mrs. Christensen has been helping kids create amazing art since 2013! She's an elementary art teacher at RTR who loves fun, creative projects. She lives in Marshall with her husband and two young children. When she's not making art, she enjoys family time, audiobooks, and finding cool treasures while thrifting.

Cera Cordova

Cera is an emerging artist out of Southwest Minnesota. She has a variety of creative avenues she likes to explore. Videography is her passion, but also likes to take a more hands on approach by creating physical objects. Paper mache is her current passion. She looks forward to meeting students who are interested in art and all the different types of ways we are able to create.

Brandy Fenenga

Brandy is a former teacher of high school chemistry and physics who now spends her time creating artwork, pysanky eggs, sewing dog collars and painting windows.

Ed Fornberg

I currently teach art at WWG school in Walnut Grove and Homeschool art classes in Westbrook. I love being creative, spending time with my grandkids and working on cars and trucks. I have taught for 47 years, and I still love it.

Janel Guertin

I'm Janel, born and raised in Granite Falls, and I LOVE animals! I have four cats, a dog, and a hedgehog who inspire me every day. I love celebrating the beauty of animals by painting fun, silly cartoon versions of them!

Bradley Hall

I'm a watercolor artist and printmaker from Granite Falls. My home and studio were once the town library and senior center in a building originally built as a church in 1889. I create art using watercolor, linoleum block printing, and a combination of both. My work is shown throughout the Midwest, and I love sharing these creative techniques with young artists! www.bradleyhallgallery.com

Clayton Hubert

Clayton Hubert is the K-12 art teacher at Red Rock Central School in Lamberton. He inspires students to express their creativity and explore new artistic paths. In his free time, Mr. Hubert makes sculptures by melting iron and pouring it into sand molds. He enjoys working with fire and metal to create exciting works of art!



MEET YOUR PRESENTERS CONT.



Tamara Isfeld

Hi! I'm Tamara Isfeld, a local artist and art teacher from Granite Falls. I love creating art inspired by nature, culture, and community. I'm excited to share ideas, create art, and have fun with you!

Zachary Jahn

I am an Abstract and Surrealist painter and illustrator who works in acrylic, ink, watercolor and beyond. I am also a CTE, a careers and technical skills teacher, in Montevideo. I enjoy foraging, time spent outdoors, RPGs and cooking.

<https://alchemicalabstractionz.com>

Sierra Kallio

Kallio describes her work as "whatever I want to do". They use recyclable materials to create films, sculptures, books, and surfaces for oil painting. Elevating disregarded materials is the focus of their work and transforming them into liminal spaces and uncanny paper creations. They currently work at the YES! House, where they host youth programming, eco events, and help run the gallery space! <https://kalli112.wixsite.com/sierrakallio>

Oak Kelsey

I am a visual artist and musician from Marshall, Minnesota. I paint with acrylic and watercolor and incorporate collage and stencils. I also do graphic design, chalk art and make zines. I write music, perform with bands and I play frequently at area open mics.

Kennar Louwagie

My name is Kennar Louwagie, I was the former art teacher at Minneota school and have since been at home with my daughter. I love art, always have and have always loved being a part of this art convention seeing students learn, have fun, and excel!

Shawn McCann

see keynote page.

The Zoo Man

As an author, storyteller, historian, and The Zoo Man, I have been blessed to meet thousands of people across Minnesota and beyond. Whether I'm holding a snake at a county fair, speaking at a library, leading a history tour, or signing books, I love sharing stories that educate, inspire, and bring people together.

SammyJo Miller

SammyJo Miller is a Minnesota artist, educator, and author who creates engaging, hands-on art experiences for libraries, schools, and community organizations. Through SJMiller Arts, she encourages creativity, curiosity, and confidence by helping participants of all ages explore new techniques, develop artistic skills, and discover the joy of making art. www.sjmillersarts.com

Adam Preuss

I am a self-taught artist who specializes in abstract portraits and mural works from Granite Falls and am a member of the Upper Sioux Community. I love to travel, paint pictures, and try new cooking recipes. I also own and operate Falls Cafe & Canoe in Granite Falls. I grew up collecting comic books and sports cards so in my free time I used to like to make new logos for sports teams or invent new comic book characters.

Thalia Reis

Hello! I am Thalia Reis a K-12 art teacher at Minneota Public schools and an adjunct at SMSU! I grew up in Marshall and love doing anything outdoors, reading and creating art!

Scott Rolfs

Scott Rolfs received his BFA in Illustration from the School of Associate Arts. He has worked for design studios creating kid friendly character art for package designs, graphic novels, children's publications and freelance clients. He especially enjoys working on his own graphic novel and coloring books. Scott also presents drawing classes for young aspiring artists on character creation and draws caricatures at events. He also enjoys drawing monsters and hot rods. www.scottrolfs.crevado.com

Melanie Schmidt

Melanie has spent the past 25 years helping children find their spark through enrichment camps and creative activities. The majority of her career has been with Mankato Area Public Schools in the Community Education Department.

Kady Simpson

Kady Simpson is an artist who has learned a lot of different techniques for creating. She is now working on combining all her ideas into art. Born and raised in Marshall, she enjoys spending time with her family and pets Cookie & Tommy!

John Sterner

John has been involved in art in so many aspects. He has taught art for many years...from first graders through university students. John has also taught workshops, small groups, community programs and university connected presentations. He makes personal and public art. He works in many mediums such as sculpting in bronze, iron and fabricated steel, making graphic art on the computer and paper, and he loves to paint.

Jim Swartz

Jim Swartz is a retired SMSU Art Professor, where he taught pottery, sculpture, jewelry, and later also digital photo over the 33 years. He is a YAC regular and has given many other pottery, sculpture and metal casting workshops for students and adults over the years. Jim specializes in welding, metal casting, iron pours and digital photography for his creative work.



SWWC SERVICE COOPERATIVE



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For the full list of partners go to www.swwc.org/foundation



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Changes Needed?

Please notify Andrea of any changes in your contact info or if your students have aged out and you need to be removed from our contact list.

SWWC
STUDENT ENRICHMENT

**Contact: Andrea Anderson,
Student Enrichment Coordinator**



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